



# *Pequannock Township High School*

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Richard M. Hayzler, Principal

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Brian Silipena, Director of Athletics

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August 2024

Dear PTHS Students, Parents and Guardians:

It is with Golden Panther Pride that I welcome you to the 2024-2025 school year! I know that the “Back to School” letter can bring about a wave of emotions. Trust me, as I write this letter, the butterflies in my stomach have me feeling excited, nervous, anxious and enthusiastic all at the same time. A new school year means new opportunities, new classes, new relationships and new routines. However, it also offers the opportunity for a fresh start, new goals and new dreams. As a new school year begins and we welcome the Class of 2028, I look forward to our future filled with Golden Panther **P**erseverance, **R**espect, **I**ntegrity, **D**etermination and **E**xcellence. PTHS is ready to shine brightly as we represent the “Blue and Gold” throughout our community.

During my time as Principal of PTHS, I have offered a school-wide theme that I felt connected to the Golden Panther Community as we grow together. In listening to feedback from our Climate and Culture Committee and reflecting on our goals for our students, as we kick off a new school year, our theme for the 2024-2025 school year will be “**Adapt. Evolve. Excel.**” These three words capture the essence of what it means to be a learner in our rapidly changing world. I don’t know about you but at the beginning of August, I was wrapped up in watching the Olympics. It was amazing watching athletes who have trained for much of their lives participate in a global competition at such a high level. Setting their sights on greatness, being an Olympic athlete was not just about talent. In listening to the stories, each one was a journey that demanded adaptability, continuous evolution and a relentless pursuit of excellence. As we return to Golden Panther Territory, we are called to navigate our journey ahead with the following as our guide:

**Adapt:** Change is a constant, and this year, we will embrace it with open arms. Whether it’s adapting to a new schedule, new subjects, teaching methods, or new relationships, our ability to be flexible and responsive will be key to our success. Together, we will find innovative solutions and grow stronger through the process.

**Evolve:** Learning is an ongoing journey, and as we progress through this year, we will continue to evolve. This means not only gaining knowledge but also developing new skills, perspectives, and attitudes. Our goal is to become more than we were yesterday—more thoughtful, more curious, and more prepared for the future.

**Excel:** With adaptation and evolution as our foundation, we are poised to excel. Excellence doesn’t just mean achieving high grades; it means putting forth our best effort, striving for improvement, and celebrating the milestones along the way. Every member of our school community has the potential to excel in their own unique way, and together, we will reach new heights.

The faculty and staff help define the standard of excellence that has been set for our community. The administration is pleased to welcome new staff members to our PTHS team this year and look forward to helping support them as they work with the eager young minds of tomorrow. The collective collaboration of our world class faculty is what helps make Pequannock Township High School a special place to learn, to work and to grow. Joining the Golden Panther community are the following new staff members:

Michelle D'Angelo	- Mathematics	Taline Papendick	- Art
Marco Garcia	- Custodian	Meghan Ricca	- School Psychologist/CST
Caitlin Lorfink	- English (End of September)	Jessica Tomarchio	- School Counselor
Sarah Panicucci	- Business (Leave Replacement)	Javier Vega	- Security

The district is also excited to welcome new staff members to the district administrative team. You will have the opportunity to meet with them during the staff development days.

Alyssa Bellardino	– Supervisor of Language Arts K-12
Ann Marie VanSickle	– Director of Curriculum and Instruction

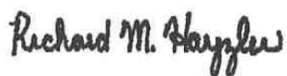
I would like to thank our custodial, IT and maintenance staff for the hard work they have put in to ensure that the school is ready for our staff and students. They have worked tirelessly to prepare for the opening of school and have the classrooms looking great! Thank you to Mrs. Miller, Ms. McLaughlin, Mrs. Tabakman and Mrs. Hummel who have done an amazing job getting all of the supplies and necessary paperwork ready for your arrival. Ms. Mildner and Mr. Silipena have been actively communicating with our partner schools, coaches and teams to make sure everyone stays up to date to ensure a smooth opening for our Vo-Tech students and our student-athletes. Our Guidance/CST staff have worked hard to make sure our schedule and classes can accommodate the students and staff. Our Supervisor Team has been busy preparing to support our students and staff for a year filled with learning and growth. It has been a true team effort!

I encourage you to read the information below carefully as it pertains to the beginning of the school year for the faculty and community at large. While there may be a lot of information, it is important to review the policies, procedures and expectations that will help the students get off to a strong start. I also encourage you to visit the school website at [www.pequannock.org](http://www.pequannock.org) and follow PTHS on Twitter (X) and Instagram at @pthsnation for updates and information.

As a new year begins, remember that growth often comes from stepping outside of our comfort zones. By embracing challenges and supporting one another, we will live our excellence together. This school year promises to be full of learning, discovery, and accomplishment for all of us. I am confident that by focusing on our ability to **adapt**, **evolve**, and **excel**, we will make it a **GOLDEN** year at PTHS. Enjoy the remaining days of summer.

Let's Go Panthers!

Sincerely,



Richard M. Hayzler  
Principal

Enclosure

“Promoting Growth Through Education”

## FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL

- The first day of school for students is **Thursday, September 5th. School begins this year at 8:05.** *Please plan on dropping your child off prior to 7:55 am.*

## NEW MASTER SCHEDULE

- PTHS has moved to a new schedule for the 2024-2025 school year. The school day will run from 8:05 am to 3:04 pm. For information about the schedule, click on the link here: [Master Schedule](#)

## BACK TO SCHOOL NIGHT

- Back To School Night will be held on **Thursday, September 26th at 7:00 P.M.** More information will be forthcoming regarding the format of the night.

## LUNCH PROCEDURES

- PTHS has a Unit Lunch between blocks 3 and 4. Students will have the opportunity to eat in the cafeteria, small gym or at the designated tables in the lobbies. The pavilion will also be available when the weather is appropriate.
- Pomptonian will continue as our school lunch provider. The cost of a standard lunch will be **\$4.75. A featured favorite lunch will be \$5.50. Parents can still utilize [www.myschoolbucks.com](http://www.myschoolbucks.com) to place money on their child's account. Accounts used last year should still be available.**
- Students must remain in the designated dining areas throughout the lunch period unless assigned a pass by a teacher.
- The senior courtyard will be available for seniors during Unit Lunch, weather permitting.
- Student Clubs will be able to meet during Unit Lunch under the supervision of the club adviser.
- ***As per Board of Education Policy #8500, there will be no delivery of food from outside agencies unless previously approved by the Building Principal. Food items brought into school for students by family members will be kept at the security vestibule until Unit Lunch or after school. Students will not be called down to pick up items.***

## SCHOOL FORMS

**All information regarding different notifications and permission forms can now be located in the Realtime Parent Portal.** When you log into the Realtime Parent Portal, please go to "Parent Questions" to give permission on different items and click on "Documents" to view certain items when necessary. In some instances, you may be prompted to view a document before clicking yes. Please be sure to review and click yes/no to the following items:

- Chromebook 1:1 Agreement (Parents and Students)
- Photo/Video/Internet Use Permission
- Random Drug Testing Letter and Consent to Test
- Google Apps Permission
- Student Handbook Acknowledgement
- Military Connected
- Military Opt Out
- Vo Tech Opt Out

**Health Forms for Medications must be accessed on the website here: [Medical Forms](#)** Please have your child bring them into school and drop them off in the main office or email to [olga.avagyan@pequannock.org](mailto:olga.avagyan@pequannock.org)

**All forms are due by September 9, 2024**

"Promoting Growth Through Education"

## 1:1 CHROMEBOOK PROGRAM

Once again each student at PTHS will be provided a Chromebook that will be used in their classes to access educational resources, produce authentic digital content and collaborate with peers and teachers.. PTHS sees this 1:1 initiative as an opportunity to increase engagement for all learners, strengthen student achievement across the curriculum and provide students with the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills and digital citizenship they will need to succeed in a global economy. **There will be a \$25.00 technology use fee that will cover all expenses related to accidental damage, theft, loss, repair, and/or exchange of the Chromebook. All 9th, 10th, 11th and 12th grade parents must pay the \$25.00 technology fee each year.** Payment options are available on the District Website under the “Parents” tab or by clicking here: [Technology Fee](#)

## ATTENDANCE/TARDINESS PROCEDURES

- If your child is going to be absent or tardy please contact the attendance office at (973)-616-6007 or email [attendance@pequannock.org](mailto:attendance@pequannock.org). Written medical documentation must be submitted for any tardy or absence to be excused. Up to three days per year will be excused for College Visitations for Grades 11 and 12 ONLY.
- Frequent absence from classroom learning experiences disrupts the continuity of the learning process and limits the ability of students to complete the prescribed curriculum requirements successfully. Students who exceed sixteen **(16) unexcused absences, twelve (12) for Physical Education and four (4) for Health** will be in danger of not receiving credit for the school year. If you have questions about the attendance procedures or if you ever find yourself in a position where circumstances impede your ability to get your child to school on time, please contact the administration immediately.
- Please note that Board of Education Policy 5200 outlines the district attendance policy. The attendance and tardiness procedures can be found in both the Student Handbook as well as on the district’s website.

## BUILDING SECURITY

- PTHS is pleased to welcome back Ron Lucas who will serve as the District Security Supervisor. Our district security team will assist with student drop off and will be responsible for supervising security in all of our district schools.
- Be aware that video surveillance cameras are installed in the building as well as on the perimeter of the campus to increase the degree of safety and security.
  1. According to state guidelines, access to the building will be denied to visitors during all fire drills, emergency evacuation drills, secure-in-place drills and active shooter drills.
  2. Parent and community involvement in the school is always encouraged. Kindly call for an appointment whenever possible. Upon entering the building, all visitors will be asked to identify themselves, state the reason for their visit and provide their driver’s license or other government issued ID such as a passport. All visitors will be required to wear a Visitor’s Pass while in the building.
  3. All doors, including the main entrance, will be locked during the school day. Students are required to remain in the building at all times unless given authorization to leave.
  4. The custodians will be instructed to secure the building at 4:15 pm.
- Our district will again be participating with the Morris County Prosecutor’s Office in a program called ***Operation Proceed***. The mission of this program is to “form a pact between the Morris County

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schools and the law enforcement community, working together to discourage drugs from entering the schools and to maintain and foster an environment that promotes health, safety and the welfare of the students, faculty and staff.” As part of this program, *random* searches of lockers and classrooms may be performed. This program may include the use of K-9 searches.

## CALENDAR

- The Pequannock Township District Calendar will be available on the district website [www.pequannock.org](http://www.pequannock.org). The calendar is a resource that will serve to remind you of the important activities and upcoming dates throughout the school year.

## CELL PHONES

- Cell phones are permitted for use by students in the hallway during passing time and in the cafeteria during lunch only.
- Cell phones are *not permitted* to be used during class time. Failure to adhere to the cell phone policy will result in disciplinary action.
- Cell phone holders have been added to each classroom for use by the classroom teacher. Students are required to put their cell phones in the holders during instructional time.

## CHAIN OF COMMAND

Students and parents are instructed to use the following chain of command in addressing discipline, grades and school policies.

1. Classroom Teacher/Staff Member
2. School Counselor and/or Case Manager
3. Supervisor
4. Assistant Principal/Director
5. Principal
6. Superintendent of School

## CODE OF CONDUCT

- The possession or use of smoking and tobacco products (including cigarettes, snuff, snus, electronic cigarettes/hookahs/hookah pens/vape pens, and chewing tobacco) are prohibited on all school grounds, buses, buildings, and during any school sponsored function, according to State Law and BOE Policy 5600 and 5533 Pupils/Smoking. Items will be confiscated. Mandatory drug testing is a requirement for students found using an electronic cigarette/vape pen.

## DRESS CODE

- Student dress is an important part of a culture of excellence. The school guidelines for dress code can be found in the Student Handbook. All shorts, skirts, dresses, etc, must be at least mid thigh length. Students will be provided with a cover up if they are inappropriately dressed. (“Soffe” shorts and one piece rompers are not considered appropriate attire.) Parents may be required to bring in appropriate clothing if necessary.

## **DROP OFF/PICK UP PROCEDURES**

- To avoid traffic, it is recommended that students are dropped off prior to 7:50am.
- Students will be let into the building at 7:55 am
- In the event of rain, students will report to the AUDITORIUM prior to 7:55 a.m.

## **EXTRA CURRICULAR CLUBS/ACTIVITIES**

- Clubs and Activities will be meeting in person before or after school and during unit lunch. A schedule of club meetings will be available on the school website and will be listed in the morning announcements that are posted each morning to our website and social media feeds.

## **FIRE/SECURITY DRILLS**

- Throughout the year the Pequannock Township School District conducts fire drills and security drills with our students and staff. Preparation and planning for unforeseen emergencies is critical to the safety and welfare of our students. PTHS will conduct at least one fire drill and one security drill each month. Please discuss the importance of these drills with your child. If you have any questions concerning the drills, please do not hesitate to contact the main office.

## **FREE AND REDUCED LUNCH**

The Federal Free Lunch Application Form and the Student Insurance Information Flyer can be found on the district website: [www.pequannock.org](http://www.pequannock.org). If you wish to apply for either of the above, please download and complete the appropriate form and return it to the **Board Office**.

## **FOLLOW PTHS ON SOCIAL MEDIA**

You can follow Pequannock Township High School on Social Media on the following accounts:

- Pequannock Township High School @pthsnation Twitter, Instagram and YouTube
- PTHS Athletics @athleticspths Twitter and Instagram
- PTHS Guidance Department @pths\_counselors Twitter

## **GRADING POLICY**

Board of Education Policy 2624 outlines the grading policy for students. Students in the district shall be considered to have passed a subject/course if a minimal grade of 63 has been achieved. Therefore students must receive a 63 or higher to pass a course for the marking period. The grading scale at PTHS is as follows:

A+	97-100	B+	87-89	C+	77-79	D+	67-69
A	93-96	B	83-86	C	73-76	D	65-66
A-	90-92	B-	80-82	C-	70-72	D-	63-64
						F	62 and below

## **GRADING EXPECTATIONS**

The following grading procedures are in effect at Pequannock Township High School:

- Grading is done on a point system with assignments having a set point value.
- This year, there is only one grading category. Homework assignments will now be included as part of the overall grade instead of being weighted at 5% of their total grade.
- Assignments are to be reported on Realtime by the teacher in a timely manner. If there is a concern regarding your child's grade, please reach out to the classroom teacher.



## **HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION AND BULLYING (HIB) POLICY**

Pequannock Township High School will continue its campaign to eliminate harassment, intimidation and bullying from our school community. Our students will be provided with opportunities to learn about the dangers of bullying and coping strategies if they feel they are bullied or feel like “an outsider.”

Board of Education Policy 5512 defines harassment, intimidation or bullying:

*“Harassment, intimidation or bullying” means any gesture, any written, verbal or physical act, or any electronic communication, as defined in N.J.S.A 18A:37-14, whether it be a single incident or a series of incidents:*

1. *Is reasonably perceived as being motivated by either any actual or perceived characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, or a mental, physical or sensory disability; or*
2. *By any other distinguishing characteristic; and that*
3. *Take place on school property, at any school-sponsored function, on a school bus, or off school grounds, as provided for in N.J.S.A. 18A:37-15.3, that substantially disrupts or interferes with the orderly operation of the school or the rights of other pupils, and that*
4. *A reasonable person should know, under the circumstances, that the act(s) will have the effect of physically or emotionally harming a pupil or damaging the pupil’s property, or placing a pupil in reasonable fear of physical or emotional harm to his/her person or damage to his/her property; or*
5. *Has the effect of insulting or demeaning any pupil or group of pupils; or*
6. *Created a hostile educational environment for the pupil by interfering with a pupil’s education or by severely or pervasively causing physical or emotional harm to the pupil.*

*“Electronic communication” means a communication transmitted by means of an electronic device, including but not limited to, a telephone, cellular phone, computer, or pager.*

Parents are advised to review the Board of Education Policy for information regarding reporting procedures, consequences/remedial actions and investigation findings. If there are questions regarding the HIB policy, please contact the District HIB Coordinator, Daniel O’Keefe at [daniel.okeefe@Pequannock.org](mailto:daniel.okeefe@Pequannock.org)

## **HOME AND SCHOOL ASSOCIATION**

It is important that support is provided to our HSA throughout the year as they provide excellent programs and support for our students. You can contact the HSA at [PAWS@pthshsa.org](mailto:PAWS@pthshsa.org) and follow them on Facebook at Pequannock Township High School HSA. You can also see all the things going on by visiting the new HSA website at <https://pthshsa.com/> We are excited to welcome our Executive Board for 2024-2025

Diana Fonque	– Co-President	Heather Mauriello	– Secretary
Deborah Zegler	– Co-President	John Tedesco	– Treasurer
Dania Rosenthal	– Vice President		

All families are encouraged to pay the membership dues each year. Families who pay the membership dues for four years will enable your child to be able to apply for a scholarship when they are a senior.

## **LOCKERS**

All students will be provided with a locker and a lock. Lockers are to be locked at all times. We highly discourage students from bringing expensive electronic devices to school as they are often lost or damaged. The school is not responsible for the safe return of these devices; especially if stored in unlocked lockers. The main office will have copies of the locker assignments and combinations. Students are required to purchase a gym lock (\$5.00) from their physical education teacher prior to the end of year. If a school lock is lost or is not returned at the end of the school year, a \$5.00 fine will be owed. All lockers and desks are school property and therefore, are subject to inspection (18A:36-19.2).

## **MEDIA CENTER**

The media center will be available during the school day for students and staff by appointment to limit the number of people using the media center at one time. The media center will be available before and after school for students to complete schoolwork.

## **MIDTERM AND FINAL EXAMS**

- Midterm and Final exams will return for the 2024-2025 school year in all departments. These exams will focus on the priority standards addressed during the school year. Midterm Exams will take place in late January and Final Exams will take place during the last week of the school year. The examinations combined will represent one-fifth (20%) of the grade for the course.

## **MILITARY RECRUITMENT**

- The federal government “No Child Left Behind” Act required all schools to release the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of the students enrolled in the building to military recruiters, college recruiters, or prospective employers if they request it. If anyone does not want this information released, you must submit this request in writing to Mrs. Diane Hummel in the Guidance Department by **Friday, September 20, 2024**.

## **NAVIANCE**

- Students and staff will be expected to use the *Naviance Family Connection*™ to complete all elements of the college application process. This will include letters of recommendation and other pertinent information needed for students to complete the Common Application. Parents can use this program to track their child’s progress in the college application process. Please contact your child’s guidance counselor if you need additional assistance (973) 616-6010.

## **RANDOM DRUG TESTING**

- The program information and sign-up form can be found on the website. If your son/daughter is involved in a sport, extra-curricular activity, applying for a parking permit or volunteering for the RDT program, please read the information and return the form to your period 1 teacher on the first day of school.



## **REALTIME PORTAL**

- Realtime is a comprehensive Student Information System that can be accessed from any computer, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. When you, as a parent or guardian, log-in you have access to information about all of the students for which you are associated. Realtime will be used for you to monitor your child's attendance, grades, homework, and report cards.

## **SCHEDULING**

- Course schedules for the 2024-2025 school year can be found in Realtime. No course schedules will be changed at this time unless there is a mistake. Please contact your child's guidance counselor should you have questions or concerns.
- All information about our new schedule can be found on our website under the Parents Tab or by clicking [here](#).
- The fall athletic schedule can be found here: [Athletic Schedule](#)

## **SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER**

The Pequannock Township School District is pleased to work with **Detective William Juliano** as our School Resource Officer. Det. Juliano has been a member of the Pequannock Township Police Department for fifteen years. He will be working with our students in the health classes as well as visiting the schools on a regular basis. Members of the Pequannock Township Police Department will also be making building visits throughout the year as part of their partnership with the Pequannock Township School District.

## **SMARTPASS**

PTHS will once again be using SmartPass as our electronic hall pass system. SmartPass is a digital hall pass system that monitors student movement throughout the school. Students must fill out a pass on their Chromebook using the SmartPass app. Students without authorized passes are not to be in the halls during class periods.

## **STUDENT ACCIDENT INSURANCE**

When considering insurance coverage, please be aware that the student insurance coverage provided by the district only supplements individual health insurance coverage and our accident insurance only covers the student for injuries sustained as part of the daily school program or associated after-school activities and interscholastic sports.

## **STUDENT PARKING**

Seniors who wish to park on school grounds must fill out the parking application, submit copies of documents, and sign the Random Drug Testing form. These forms are available on the [website](#). Parking rules can be found in the Student Handbook and on our website. Contact the Assistant Principal's office with any questions.

## **STUDENT YEARBOOK PHOTOS**

This year we will be doing underclassman student photos on **September 18th and 19th** in all Physical Education classes.

## SUPPLIES

There is no supply list for Pequannock Township High School. Students will receive information from their individual teachers regarding what supplies are needed. The following is recommended:

- Students should have a 3-5 subject notebook, pens and pencils for the first day of school

## STUDENT HANDBOOK

A copy of the 2024-2025 Student Handbook can be found here: [Student Handbook](#). Please take time to read the handbook and stay informed on policies and procedures.

## STUDENT IDENTIFICATION BADGES

Students are required to have their student ID badges with them at all times. In the event of an emergency, field trip or competition, students must have their ID badges with them. Students can use their badges from a previous year until their new school pictures are taken.

## TRAFFIC

Please read the letter from Mr. Lucas, the Director of Security, about the [traffic procedures](#) at Pequannock Township High School.

### IMPORTANT LINKS

#### [All Back to School Information](#)

<a href="#">Attendance Information</a>	<a href="#">Medical Forms</a>
<a href="#">Daily Rotational Schedule</a>	<a href="#">New Bell Schedule Information</a>
<a href="#">District Calendar</a>	<a href="#">Student Handbook</a>
<a href="#">Free and Reduced Lunch Information</a>	<a href="#">Student Parking</a>
<a href="#">Home and School Information</a>	<a href="#">Technology Fee</a>
<a href="#">Lunch Ordering</a>	<a href="#">Traffic Procedures</a>